

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-02 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

SSM-05 IO-14 ACDA-12 HA-05 /089 W

-----051606 312311Z /73

R 311040Z DEC 77

FM AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7729

USINFO WASHDC

INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO

UNCLAS ALGIERS 3247

USINFO FOR IOP/M, IBS, IPS, INA

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SOPN XF EG IS AG

SUBJECT: ALGERIAN PRESS NEGATIVE ON ISMAILIA SUMMIT

1. IN TERMS SOMEWHAT MORE MEASURED THAN EARLIER CONDEMNATIONS OF EGYPTIAN INITIATIVES, ALGERIAN PRESS OF PAST SEVERAL DAYS HAS DESCRIBED ISMAILIA SUMMIT AS FAILURE. ALTHOUGH PAPERS CONTINUE TO DESCRIBE ERRORS OF PRESIDENT SADAT'S WAYS, THEY ATTRIBUTE "FAILURE" OF ISMAILIA SUMMIT MOSTLY TO ISRAELI INTRANSIGENCE, ESPECIALLY ON PALESTINIAN ISSUE. GIVEN THIS "FAILURE", PAPERS INTERPRET PRESIDENT SADAT'S STATED DESIRE TO CONTINUE DIALOGUE AS CLEAR SIGN THAT EGYPT AND ISRAEL INTEND TO SIGN SEPARATE ACCORD, NOW THAT PALESTINIAN ISSUE HAS BEEN PUT ASIDE AND EGYPT'S GOOD INTENTIONS VIS A VIS

PALESTINIANS HAVE BEEN ESTABLISHED. AT LEAST FOR THE MOMENT, ATTACKS ON U.S. SUPPORT FOR EGYPTIAN INITIATIVES HAVE CEASED.

2. HEADLINES AND NEWS PLAY STRESS ABOVE THEMES:

"ISMAILIA FAILURE: NO SURPRISE IN ARAB WORLD" (LEADING GOVERNMENT-OWNED ALGIERS DAILY IN FRENCH "EL-MOUDJAHID" UNCLASSIFIED

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DECEMBER 28); "BEGIN DISAPPOINTS SADAT: ISRAEL DEMANDS TOTAL SURRENDER" (GOVERNMENT-OWNED ALGIERS DAILY IN ARABIC "ASH-SHA'B" DECEMBER 27); "ISRAEL RENEWS REFUSAL TO RETURN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES" ("EL-MOUDJAHID" DECEMBER 29); "BEGIN CONFIRMS ISRAEL'S COMMITMENT TO RESULTS OF AGGRESSION AND EXPANSIONISM, AND SADAT DETERMINED TO CONTINUE SURRENDERIST PATH" ("ASH-SHA'B" DECEM-

BER 29); "ONLY RESULT OF BEGIN-SADAT SUMMIT: NORMALIZATION OF ISRAEL-EGYPTIAN RELATIONS" ("EL-MOUDJAHID" DECEMBER 27).

3. IN FRONT-PAGE EDITORIAL DECEMBER 27, "EL-MOUDJAHID" WROTE: "SADAT'S INITIATIVE HAS BROUGHT NEW AND DOUBLE FAILURE -- FAILURE ON SINAI AND FAILURE ON WEST BANK.... NOTHING IS SETTLED. SECOND BEGIN-SADAT MEETING... HAD SOLE MERIT OF PROVING THAT 'THOSE OTHER ARABS' WERE RIGHT TO DENOUNCE EGYPTIAN PRESIDENT'S MAD, INTEMPERATE STEP IN GOING TO ISRAEL.... ISMAILIA IMPASSE PROVES THAT ISRAELI POSITION IS STILL ... BASED ON TRADITIONAL SCHEME OF ULTRA-EXPANSIONISM.... WHAT IS LEFT NOW THAT ACTORS HAVE PLAYED OUT THEIR ROLES? NOTHING, EXCEPT THAT FROM NOW ON... NORMALIZATION OF ISRAELI-EGYPTIAN RELATIONS IS REALITY. ALL OF THIS EXCHANGE FOR ENORMOUS POLITICAL CONCESSIONS. A MAGNIFICANT NEW YEAR'S PRESENT FOR BEGIN FROM HIS FRIEND SADAT."

4. "ASH-SHA'B" WRITES IN FRONT-PAGE EDITORIAL DECEMBER 27: "RESULTS OF ISMAILIA MEETING PUT END TO DELUSIONS CREATED BY EGYPTIAN REGIME'S INITIATIVE RE ACHIEVEMENT OF 'JUST PEACE' THROUGH DESPICABLE SURRENDER.... AFTER EXPLOITING SADAT'S INITIATIVE, ISRAEL REAFFIRMED ITS STRATEGIC POSITION AND ITS CONCEPT OF SECURITY.... SADAT... IS NOW NAKED AND BANKRUPT.... HE CAN NO LONGER UNCLASSIFIED

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RETREAT FROM SURRENDER HE HAS BEGUN, SINCE HE HAS PUT HIS FULL THRUST IN ZIONISM AND IMPERIALISM."

5. "EL-MOUDJAHID" WRITES IN NEWS LEAD DECEMBER 29: "ARRAGANCE AND INTRANSIGENCE OF ZIONIST ADMINISTRATION RE PALESTINIAN QUESTION WERE SOLEMNLY REAFFIRMED JUST FEW HOURS AFTER ISMAILIA 'SUMMIT' WHICH HAD BEEN PRESENTED IN TEL AVIV AND ESPECIALLY IN CAIRO AS 'KEY TO MIDEAST CRISIS'. REAFFIRMATION OF MAINTENANCE OF ISRAELI FORCES IN WEST BANK AND GAZA IS NEW SLAP AT EGYPTIAN PRESIDENT, ALL OF WHOSE INITIATIVES TOWARDS ISRAEL HAD RESTED ON HOPE OF SEEING BEGIN MAKE SOME 'CONCESSIONS' TO JUSTIFY HIS OWN. IN SPITE OF OPENLY PROCLAIMED DISTAIN OF ZIONISTS RE ARAB CAUSE, SADAT NONETHELESS PERSISTS IN HIS PROCESS OF 'DIALOGUE'."

6. IN FRONT PAGE EDITORIAL, "ASH-SHA'B" WRITES DECEMBER 29: "ON WHAT BASIS DOES SADAT EXPRESS OPTIMISM RE ACHIEVEMENT OF SOLUTION DURING NEXT FEW WEEKS...? ONLY ONE POSSIBILITY JUSTIFIES THIS OPTIMISM -- ACHIEVEMENT OF SEPARATE ACCORD... EGYPTIAN REGIME, HAVING BEEN DECLARED 'INNOCENT' OF SELL-OUT BY

BEGIN HIMSELF, WILL ENTER FINAL STAGE OF SPEARATE
ACCORD PROTECTED BY NATIONALISTS, PRINCIPLED POSITIONS
WHICH ENEMY ITSELF HAS ATTRIBUTED TO IT... SADAT---
FINDS HIMSELF TODAY STRIPPED OF ALL WEAPONS... HE
CAN DO NOTHING BUT ACCEPT WHAT LITTLE ISRAEL IS OFFER-
ING, WHATEVER CRUMBS THAT PERMIT HIM TO CALIM VICTORY
AND KEEP HIM FROM THROWING HIMSELF INTO NILE."

7. LEADING GOVERNMENT-OWNED WEEKLY IN FRENCH "ALGERIE
ACTUALITE" WRITES IN LEAD EDITORIAL OF DECEMBER 29-
JANUARY 4 ISSUE: "SECOND PHASE IN PROCESS OF CAPTIULA-
TION BEGUN BY EGYPT ... HAS JUST TAKEN PLACE IN SIMAILIA...
THIS MEETING TURNED OUT TO BE... TOMB OF SADAT'S
ISSLUIONS. IT PROVED THAT ISRAELI POSITION REMAINS
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UTTERLY OBSTINATE... RE RETENTION OF TERRITORIES OCCUPIED
IN 1967... SO, MAIN PREOCCUPATION AT PRESENT IS
CONCLUSION OF SEPARATE PEACE ACCORD AND NORMALIZATION
OF RELATIONS BETWEEN EGYPT AND ISRAEL. AFTER ALL, WHAT
IS EGYPT SEEKING, IF NOT TO LIQUIADATE ARAB CAUSE AND GET
ISRAELI RETREAT FROM SINAI AT SINAI AT PRICE OF PALESTINIAN
PEOPLE'S RIGHTS?"HAYNES

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